11-15-18

OPINION: MINORITIES RULE

WOMEN AND LGBTQ CANDIDATES GET ELECTED INTO OFFICE, BREAKING RECORDS.

the VALLEY STAR

The Independent Student Newspaper of Los Angeles Valley College

VALLEY LIFE: LATINO HERITAGE

A WEEK-LONG LATINO HERITAGE WEEK WAS HELD AT VALLEY, HONORING CULTURE.

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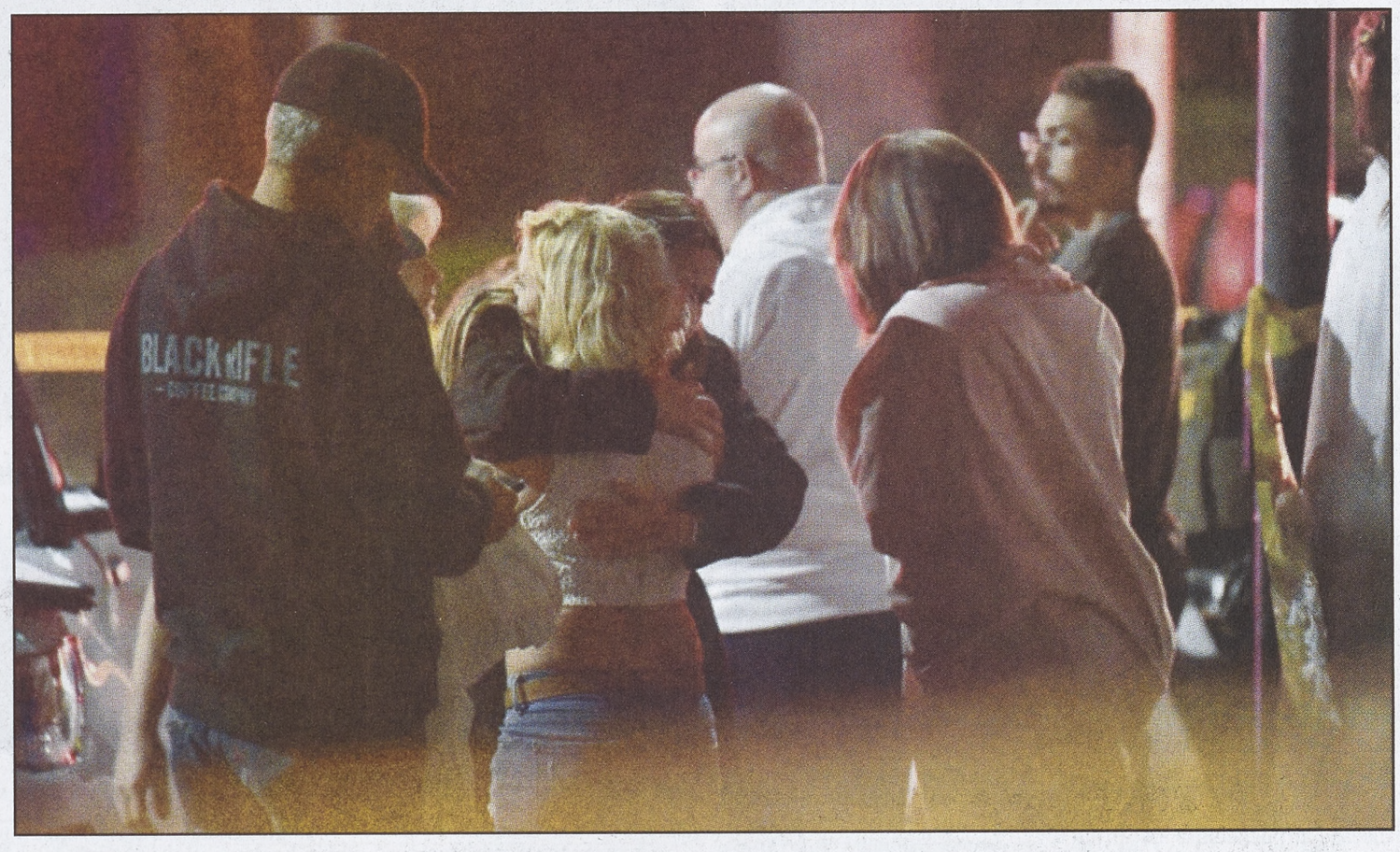
"Country Night" ends with 12 dead

A shooting too close to home takes the lives of 12 and sends fear and sorrow throughtout the community.

SAVANNAH SIMMONS
OPINION EDITOR



SHOOTING- Victims of the Thousand Oaks Borderline shooting gathered to embrace after a night of tragedy.

Twelve people were killed at a bar in the Ventura County area during a "College Country Night" held for students after a former Marine opened fire late last night.

Borderline Bar and Grill in Thousand Oaks is regularly the spot for country dancing and college students but Wednesday night, students from schools such as Cal State Channel Islands, Pepperdine, Cal Lutheran, and Moorpark College gathered for a "College Country Night" that ended in horror.

"He didn't say anything at all, he just started shooting," said a father, interviewed by ABC7 News, who was out for the night with his son. "They're all young, this shouldn't happen to them."

The gunman is identified as Ian David Long, a 28-year-old Marine Corps veteran who has had run-ins with the law before. Long entered the bar around 11:20 p.m., threw a smoke bomb and began shooting into the crowd.

Sheriff's Sgt. Ron Helus and a California Highway Patrol officer were the first law enforcement officers on the scene. Helus, a member of the force for 29 years with plans to retire next year, died at a nearby hospital after getting shot several times. The other eleven victims have not yet been identified.

"He gave his all," said Ventura County Sheriff Geoff Dean about Helus. "Tonight, as I told his wife, he died a hero. He went in to save lives, to save other people."

The shooter was found dead at the scene, Sheriff Geoff Dean believes the gunshot had been inflicted by Long himself. Officials also found a legally purchased Glock 21 .45-caliber handgun and that the gunman used an extended magazine during the shooting said Dean in a press conference.

There is no clear motive as to why the shooter went on this killing spree or why he chose the college event at Borderline.

People broke windows with chairs to escape while others hid under pool tables waiting until there was a break in gunfire to run out of the building. Others were found by law enforcement hiding in bathrooms and in the attic.

A Mission College student shared that a family friend who attended Cal Fullerton was at the bar and got injured. The student received a call at 7 a.m. from the family, immediately turned on the television and saw their friend being rolled away on a stretcher behind the ABC7 reporter. The victim has been taken to the hospital and is being treated along with the 20 other injured victims.

"It is crazy, it can happen to anyone and any place," said the Mission student who wishes to remain anonymous. "It doesn't hit you until it happens to you."

Families used cell phones to search for loved ones who may have been at the scene. While some were fortunate to get into contact with their loved ones, others are left in the dark as some victims have yet to be identified. Among those searching, Tamara Mowry-Housley, talk show host of The Real, and Adam Housley, former Fox News Channel correspondent, worry for their niece who attends Pepperdine and was at the event.

"We haven't found her yet. It's been 7 hrs since the shooting," tweeted Mowry-Housley. Her niece has since been confirmed as one of the victims who was killed.

This shooting happens just a little over a month after the one-year anniversary of the Route 91 Harvest Festival shooting that killed 58 people in Las Vegas and some of the "College Night" goers were also survivors of the Las Vegas shooting.

Chandler Gunn, of Newbury Park, told The Los Angeles Times about his friend who was at Route 91 and worked at Borderline. He said she had gotten out safe after she saw smoke and heard gunshots.

"A lot of people in the Route 91 situation go here," said Gunn. "There's people that live a whole lifetime without seeing this and then there's people that have seen it twice."

Thousand Oaks is currently ranked third on niche.com in the 2018 Safest Cities in America and was just victim to the 307th mass shooting in America.

"I've been a cop for 41 years," said Sheriff Dean. "But I've learned it doesn't matter what community you're in, it doesn't matter how safe your community is, it can happen anywhere."

RESOURCES

Call the Disaster Distress Helpline at 1-800-985-5990, or text "TalkWithUs" to 66746 to be connected with a trained crisis counselor if you are experiencing distess.

Burning through LA: winds cause multiple fires

Numerous fires rip through California, destroying thousands of homes and causing millions of dollars in damages.

MEGAN JACKSON
NEWS EDITOR

SPECIAL TO THE STAR | JORDAN LIEBERMAN

FIRE- A melted semi-truck is left after fire destroys everything in its path, some trees remain on fire.

California mountains are up in flames with the number of fires growing, torching thousands of acres and forcing entire communities to evacuate.

The numerous wildfires, which range from 180 miles northeast of San Francisco to the Santa Rosa Valley in Southern California, come as California recovers from wildfires that have devastated parts of the state in previous months. Following the mass shooting Wednesday leaving 12 residents dead, Thousand Oaks is now battling another attack with the Hill Fire. Farther north, the Camp Fire is demolishing the North California town of Paradise. The Woolsey Fire is burning in Los Angeles and Ventura Counties. Most recently, a brush fire arose on the Hillside behind the LA Zoo in Griffith Park.

"It is critical that residents pay close attention to evacuation orders," tweeted the Los Angeles County Fire Department. "This is a very dangerous wind-driven fire."

Acting Gov. Gavin Newsom issued an emergency proclamation for Los Angeles and Ventura counties due to the effects of the massive fires, which have destroyed homes, threatened critical infrastructure and caused the evacuation of residents.

"We put people's lives at risk, especially all of our first responders, when we don't get out in time," said Peter Foy, chairman to the board of supervisors for Ventura County.

During the press briefing for the Woolsey fire this morning, Foy continued to state, "The past 72 hours in Ventura County has been a difficult time ... If you can help your neighbors, we really appreciate that. But also when the sheriffs come to your house and say it's time to go, please get out."

All together, these fires have charred over 90,000 acres of land in different parts of California. Authorities say the dry conditions in some parts of California are rather prime conditions for wildfires. In addition to the dehydrated hills, the Santa Ana's 40-60 mile winds have the power to take the Woolsey Fire all the way to the ocean.

"The wind-whipped conditions ... this is ripe conditions for explosive fire behavior," said LAFD Capt. Erik Scott. "This is the new normal. When we have conditions like this, when it's such incredible wind, that brings us in to a different caliber, so it's become a much more challenging condition."

The Woolsey Fire jumped the 101 freeway and is rolling through Kanan Canyon towards the ocean, forcing evacuation on over 75,000 homes. With the situation rapidly changing, that number is expected to grow. The Woolsey fire burned 14,000 acres and has a zero percent containment rate. Highway

See 'Fire' p 2

IMPORTANT INFO

The Sheriff's Office can escort students anytime, day or night. To request a safety escort on campus, contact the Sheriff's Office at (818) 947-2911.

ON CAMPUS

November 15

The Career/Transfer Center (CTC) is offering a one-on-one UC Personal Insight Workshop from 1:30 to 3 p.m.

November 15

Women's soccer team will face Pierce College on the Soccer/Football field at 2 p.m.

November 16

The Department of Theatre presents he Baltimore Waltz in the Horseshoe Theatre. Tickets $15 online or $20 at the door.

November 17

American Guitar Society- LA's Guitar All-Star Concert will be held in the Music Recital Hall 106 at 8 p.m. General tickets are $20.

November 20

The Career/Transfer Center (CTC) will host a CSUN admis-sions representative to meet one-on-one with interested students. Contact the CTC to reserve a spot.

November 22

Campus will be closed for Thanksgiving break Nov. 22 to Nov. 25.

These features and more can be found in full @ www.thevalleystar.com

TWITTER

See anything interesting on campus or around Valley College? Tweet us @ValleyStarNews. Follow us on Twitter to stay up to date on school events and stories!

Lungs take a hit with pot smoke, UCLA study says

Multiple studies have linked smoking marijuana to lung damage and respiratory problems; Valley students wieigh in.

MICKIE SHAW
MULTI-MEDIA EDITOR

Marijuana, the most popular of illegal drugs, is now legal in several U.S. states for medical and recreational purposes, including in California, and while cannabis has many medicinal uses, smoking weed has damaging effects on a smoker's lung health.

Cannabis is smoked with pipes, bongs, paper-wrapped joints, blunts and other devices that heat or vaporize it. Users prefer smoking because it has a faster effect than eating it in various kinds of foods. But studies have shown smoking weed affects the lungs adversely and has properties similar to smoking cigarettes. It can also cause respiratory problems.

A study conducted by Dr. Donald Tashkin at UCLA found marijuana smokers inhale more toxins than tobacco smokers because they inhale deeper and hold their breath four times longer than tobacco smokers.

"Marijuana smoking deposits [in the lungs] significantly more tar and known carcinogens within the tar," said Dr. Tashkin.

According to a University of Washington report from their Alcohol and Drug Abuse Institute, the deeper and longer inhalation and the higher burn temperature results in five times the carbon monoxide concentration, three times the tar, and the retention of one-third more tar in the respiratory tract as compared to tobacco. Plus, higher amounts of ammonia and hydrogen cyanide have been found in marijuana smoke, as opposed to tobacco.

The incidence of chronic bronchitis is also higher in weed smokers than non-smokers. Smokers also have a higher rate of doctor visits for respiratory problems than non-smokers.

Long-term marijuana smoking damages the respiratory tract.

"It has the same respiratory irritants and carcinogens as tobacco smoke," said Sonia Nodal, Clinical Supervisor/Physician Assistant at the Valley College Student Health Center. "Marijuana smoke acutely irritates the airways producing cough, phlegm, inflammation and even wheezing."

Heavy cannabis smoking has also been linked to bullous lung disease, air pockets in between the lungs and the lungs and chest wall, which can grow in size and cause shortness of breath. It also causes more mucus to form in the lung.

The incidence of chronic bronchitis is also higher in weed smokers than non-smokers. Smokers also have a higher rate of doctor visits for respiratory problems than non-smokers. Smoking pot is also shown to lower the bodies immune system and its ability to fight disease in people with compromised immune systems from disease or immune-suppressing drugs.

Water devices like bongs offer no protection from the downside of smoking weed. They have been shown to have the same amount of tar and do not reduce the risks associated with inhaling the smoke.

Vaporizers are advertised to be a safer method of smoking with lower levels of tar than cigarettes and fewer respiratory symptoms reported by users. However, vaping has been shown to release ammonia, which when inhaled can cause irritation as well as asthma and bronchial spasms.

The American Lung Association warns against cannabis second-hand smoke because it has many of the same carcinogens and toxins as inhaled marijuana smoke and in similar amounts. The smoke itself can also raise the risk of cardiovascular disease and stroke.

Smoking cannabis is the most popular among young people including teenagers. But, the dangers of smoking cannabis is not well known.

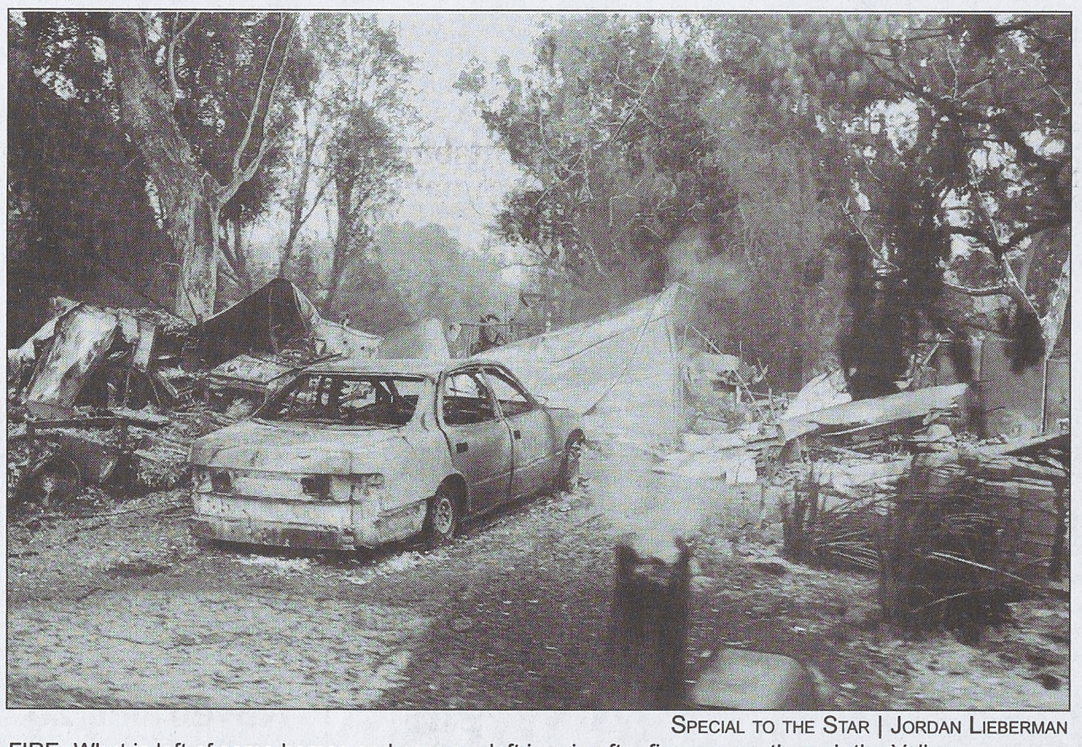
Zpour Tinkjian, an 18-year-old studio art major at Valley and a non-smoker, said, "all I know most about is hallucinations and the whole read eye situations, where [smokers] wear shades."

ENVATO | GETTY

WEED- As marijuana usage increases so does its negative effects on a smoker's lungs, studies show.

Some students aren't too concerned about the effects. Steven Williams, a 30-year-old mechanical engineering student, is nonchalant about the dangers.

Williams said, "This is something I enjoy, and there might be health risks. There is not going to be health risks tomorrow, and there's not going to be health risks in ten years. There's going to be health risks in 35 years. Who knows what I am going to be doing in 35 years."



SPECIAL TO THE STAR | JORDAN LIEBERMAN

FIRE- What is left of some homes and cars are left in ruin after fire sweaps through the Valley,

'Fire' from page 1

Patrol officials shut down the 101 in both directions at Liberty Canyon road after the blaze.

Ventura County Fire Department Captain Scott Dettorre warned that as the fire crosses the famous highway 101, "it will make its historic and typical run all the way down Pacific Coast Highway, threatening more homes, more property, more lives," KTLA-TV reports.

The Hill Fire had consumed 6,100 acres, or 9.5 square miles, according to Cal Fire, though the Ventura County Fire Department reported no injuries or structure losses at a Thursday night press conference.

As of writing, the Camp Fire has burned 70,000 acres. Paradise was evacuated, along with the nearby communities of Magalia, Pulga, Concow, Butte Valley and Butte Creek Canyon. According to fire officials, the Camp Fire had quadrupled overnight. Houses and cars were devoured by the flames; the Camp Fire demolished Paradise. MSN News reported that the fire claimed multiple fatalities, but a full count has yet to be released.

The newest fire caused by the heavy wind is the Griffith Park fire burning behind the LA Zoo. With no wind in Burbank today and only growing to be two to three acres, this fire has a promising end. The fire has charred 30 acres of difficult terrain that firefighters had to hike to get to due to the fire's placement. LA Zoo officials have started preparing the animals for evacuation and hosing down the areas on the hillside that may be vulnerable to burning. There are no damaged structures or injuries reported at this time.

Valley College's community is being directly affected by these fires. Friends and families of both students and faculty either know someone being forced to evacuate or are evacuating themselves.

"I'm shocked...I'm shaking," said Valley College student Assaf Assaraf. "Wow, I never thought this would happen to someone I know."

Walk for Freedom: a start to the end of human trafficking

The A21 Campaign is taking action is taking action against human trafficking through education and fundraising.

KIMBERLY LINARES
STAFF WRITER

Walk for Freedom is an annual global fundraising and awareness event where thousands of abolitionists take millions of steps in hopes of abolishing slavery within the 21st century.

The event is coordinated by the A21 Campaign, a non-profit organization that fights trafficking, sexual exploitation, forced slave labor, involuntary domestic servitude and child soldiery. A21 came about when motivational speaker Christine Caine walked through the airport in Thessaloniki, Greece, in 2007 and noticed a number of posters with pictures of girls missing.

After long research, she discovered that the girls were being trafficked. Caine decided to take action and, with her husband, founded A21 in 2008 in the hopes of educating people about trafficking.

"The world without slavery is possible, and while human trafficking is destroying lives, we know that freedom will have the final word."
- Christine Caine

"[Human trafficking] happens when the world closes their eyes and pretends something isn't happening. When you no longer care about the process of how something gets to you but you just want the end result, then you close your eyes to what's going on," said Caine on an interview for End Slavery Now in a blog article.

The Walk takes place in October every year, with the purpose of shaking the foundation of slavery. Abolitionists walk in single file lines wearing black shirts with the message, "abolish slavery with each step."

"The world without slavery is possible, and while human trafficking is destroying lives, we know that freedom will have the final word," said Caine on a video published on the A21 website.

Traffickers use different methods when trying to recruit a victim. Known ways in which A21 survivors have been trafficked globally have been because of false job advertisement, sold by family, abduction, trafficked by a friend or false immigration.

"I was drugged and made to beg on the streets during the day, and at night I was forced to have sex with foreigners," said Rose, an A21 Thailand survivor, in a video.

The child advocacy program in Thailand houses the police and A21 program, meaning that when the police find a child that is a potential victim of trafficking, they are able to bring the child to a safe environment. An environment that is filled with psychologists, doctors and resources needed to help victims undergo this difficult hardship.

Despite Rose's horrific story filled with abuse, Rose walked out with a future, receiving her life back. A21 was able to place Rose and her sister back in Cambodia with a foster family.

The signs of human trafficking are easily recognizable. If another person controls the individual or if there are signs of physical abuse, bad health and malnutrition, such clues help identify a slave victim.

A-Teams are an extension of A21, these teams are made of abolitionists that use their time, talent and influence to fundraise and educate others by spreading awareness on a topic that has been ignored by society.

"I knew I wanted to do something about human trafficking. A-Teams has equipped me with the resources to turn my passion into action," said an A-Team member.

Slavery is the fastest-growing organized criminal enterprise in the world, making more than $150 billion every year, according to A21.

The operational strategy – and the heart cry of the organization – is to reach, rescue and restore, all of which positively impacts the survivors in the hopes of bringing back the lives of those that have momentarily lost it.

THE ISSUE

Slavery

According to A21.org, there are millions of slaves all around the world, it is the fastest-growing criminal industry generating more than $150 billion every year and only 1 percent are ever rescued.
There are many types of trafficking like: sex trafficking, forced labor, bonded labor, child soldiers and involuntary domestic servitude.
To report, call local authorities. Visit their website for more information.

OPINION

Women and LGBTQ win big in election

The midterm elections proved to be powerful and significant for minorities, electing women of color and LGBTQ candidates into office.

MONSERRAT SOLIS
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

A record-breaking 117 women and LGBTQ candidates were elected during the 2018 Midterm Election across the United States — which means more power to minorities.

Electing women and minorities into government solidifies representation for people who historically had their voices silenced. Where women are 50.8 percent of the American population, we need to have a say in what happens to us.

In an exit poll run by CNN, 80 percent of voters said "it's very or somewhat important that more women be elected to public office," and half said "it's very important."

Seven-in-ten said that it is "very somewhat important for racial and ethnic minorities to be elected to public office." Eighty percent of African-American voters said it is important to elect minorities while two-thirds of white voters agreed.

Democrats took control of the House of Representatives after the midterms, in which 17 of the 27 flipped seats were filled by women.

Minnesota's Ilhan Omar, has many firsts to her name: first women of color from Minnesota, first women to wear a hijab, first refugee and one of the first Muslim women in Congress. Omar fights to abolish ICE, for the protection of immigrant families and refugees, women's rights and climate change.

Rashida Tlaib is the first Palestinian-American to join the U.S. Congress, an advocate for a $15 minimum wage and Medicare for all.

Deb Haaland and Sharice Davids are the first Native-American Congresswomen. Ayanna Pressley, Jahana Hayes and Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez have also made their mark on history.

Marsha Blackburn made history after winning the Tennessee Senate seat with almost 55 percent against her male counterpart, Phil Bredesen, becoming Tennessee's first female Senator.

More than half of the nation's children are expected to be part of a minority race or ethnic group by 2020, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. These women are creating change in the government - whether they are blue or red - and showing future generations that their dream of becoming anything, despite their gender, race or sexual preference, is possible.

The LGBTQ community made their mark as well, with New Hampshire electing its first transgender members: Lisa Bunker and Gerri Cannon. Colorado's Jared Polis is the first openly gay Governor, and David Cicilline of Rhode Island, Sean Patrick Maloney of New York, Kyrsten Sinema of Arizona, Mark Pocan of Wisconsin and Mark Takano of California are now openly gay members of the House of Representatives.

A study by Gallup states that there are 10 million Americans that identify as LGBT and having representatives in the government offers them an ally. Because minorities are the first to be attacked, support and power should be geared towards them.

As the minority and LGBTQ communities expand, there needs to be proper representation in politics who can speak for us. These changes are significant for the rights of people who have been discriminated against, now finally their voices will be heard.

SHUTTERSTOCK | JIM LO SCALZO

ELECTION- Sharice Davids is one of the first Native American women elected to Congress.

Coping with the trauma of mass shootings

Tragic events can happen in seconds and leave victims with a lifetime of emotional trauma, but loved ones can help them cope.

MONSERRAT SOLIS
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

After the Thousand Oaks shooting that left 12 people dead and injured about 20 more, we are left to wonder– what happens in the aftermath of a national tragedy and how can people cope?

Mass shootings result in emotional and physical scars as well as death. The American Psychological Association states that most survivors show resilience, but some "experience ongoing mental health problems, including post-traumatic stress, depression, anxiety, and substance abuse."

"They're kids, just kids. I'm so sorry."
- Tim Dominguez

"It was traumatizing," said Sarah Rose DeSon to CNN, who was a survivor of the Thousand Oaks shooting, after looking back to the scene where her friend Cody Coffman shielded her from the shooter.

Survivors may feel traumatized and can create long-term distress through neurobiological effects experienced by threats to life and have an altered assumption of safety, according to "Shattered Assumptions: Towards a New Psychology of Trauma" by Ronnie Janoff-Bulman.

There are also people who experience survivor's guilt: a feeling of guilt that arises after living through a catastrophe in which others die, like Tim Dominguez who repeatedly apologized to the families who were affected after running to safety with his stepson when the shooting started.

"They're kids, just kids. I'm so sorry," Dominguez said to an ABC7 reporter.

The APA offers tips to manage distress in the aftermath of a shooting: talking about it and asking for support, allowing time to grieve and engage in healthy behaviors such as balanced meals or avoiding alcohol and drugs. Seeking professional help from a psychologist may also be needed to move forward.

Anthony Charuvastra, doctor and writer for Psychology Today, expresses that the repeat of National tragedies like the shooting in Las Vegas affect people's vulnerability and describes these events as "psychologically altering."

These deplorable events can happen anywhere, schools, places or worship, concerts and office buildings. They stir fear inside adults, parents and children; it can become distracting and even consuming.

Charuvastra stresses that trying to find a way to feel safe is essential. Getting in touch with reality, helping others, managing exposure to the media and learning to live with fearful events and not in spite of them are coping mechanisms everyone can use.

The National Suicide Hotline can help people who are experiencing distress and offer support and resources, for help call 1-800-273-8255. Reaching out to family and friends can help in the long-run, having someone to talk to and count on will help the recovery process. Do not be afraid to seek help, there are resources out there.

THE FACTS

According to the Gun Violence Archive, 310 mass shootings have occurred in the United States so far this year.

According to the American Psychiatric Association, post-traumatic stress disorder affects approximately 3.5 percent of adults in the country, and women are twice as likely as men to develop PTSD.

More guns? No. How about better surveillance

The tragic Pittsburgh massacre has many contemplating national security and the government's competence.

MEGAN JACKSON
NEWS EDITOR

Following the deadliest attack on the Jewish community in U.S. history, people of all religions are disappointed in the government as well as shocked, grief-stricken and anxious that tragedy will strike in their community at any moment.

Robert D. Bowers opened fire in a Pittsburgh synagogue Oct. 27, leaving six people injured and 11 dead. The 46 year old stormed the Tree of Life Congregation Saturday morning, armed with an AR-15 and three handguns. Bowers fired his gun while expressing his hatred towards Jewish people, killing beloved pillars of the community. It is terrifying that a spiteful man can walk into at a sacred place of worship, where people typically feel the safest, and commit heinous crimes such as multiple homicides.

The Southern Poverty Law Center, an organization that tracks the activities of extremists, found that, "in the 19 days before Bowers carried out his act of mass murder, he posted or reposted memes and comments at least 68 times." Many of those reflected "anti semitic conspiracy theories that have long been in circulation among neo-Nazis and white nationalists," the center found.

The most recent post shared by Bowers was a photo of three handguns that he captioned "glock family." He continued on with the statements, "jews are the children of satan" and "HIAS [Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society] likes to bring invaders in that kill our people. I can't sit by and watch my people get slaughtered. Screw your optics, I'm going in."

According to their website, the SPLC is dedicated to fighting hate and bigotry and to seek justice for the most vulnerable members of our society. So why did they not catch this? This is a direct threat and declaration of an attack. This man had an extensive online presence, spewing hatred and anti-semitism. Was he not considered a true threat because he did not have a criminal record? Was he on some form of a "watch" list? The fact that this threat and attack could have been prevented is gut-wrenching.

"Hug your loved ones real close every time you leave [your] home."
- Cesar Sayoc Jr.

This is yet another terrorist who slipped through the government's grasp before executing their attack. Business Insider recently reported that the suspected package-bomber Cesar Sayoc Jr. sent more than 240 threats via Twitter to dozens of public officials; notable statements made towards the extremist's targets are "Your Time is coming" and "Hug your loved ones real close every time you leave you [sic] home."

The report stated, "While the FBI has made an effort to inform Sayoc's targets of the threats, social media giants like Twitter and Facebook have been criticized for being slower to take proactive measures."

It is mind-boggling that blame is being placed on social media companies and not the government. Companies like Twitter and Facebook monitor users feeds for inappropriate content and usage. While they do investigate reports of harassment and monitor user interactions, they can not be held accountable for catching terrorists; that is the government's job.

Another valid argument to be made is that the government is catching these terrorists, but by the time they make the arrests, the damage has already been done; 13 mail-bombs delivered and 11 innocent people murdered. The government should be putting forth more effort to prevent the attacks rather than how to manage public opinion afterwards.

The bottom line is whether you are at a place of worship, at a grocery store or scrolling through Facebook, everyone deserves the same level of protection. The government needs to strengthen their protocol in catching terrorists and preventing radical events such as the Pittsburgh massacre.

VALLEY VIEW | What do you think about the government or media being too quick to pin mass shootings on mental illness?

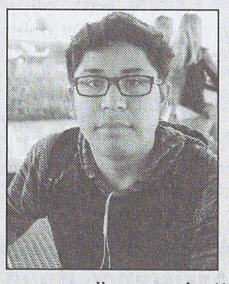
TEXT BY ANDREA GONZALEZ
PHOTOS BY MICKIE SHAW

"I think they're quick to judge, like they don't take in enough facts or evidence to make those accusations."
- HENRY ALDANA, PSYCHOLOGY

"I feel like they are right to pin it real quickly because you have to be clinically insane to do a mass shooting."
- JOHNNIE COLEMAN, UNDECIDED

"I think it's wrong in a way and I don't think it's fair ... and I think they should do more investigation."
- ANNA JAIMES, NURSING

"I think they are highlighting a real problem with mental illness. The problem is that they are using it to discount a need for regulation."
- TAYLOR GOTTBETTER, CINEMA



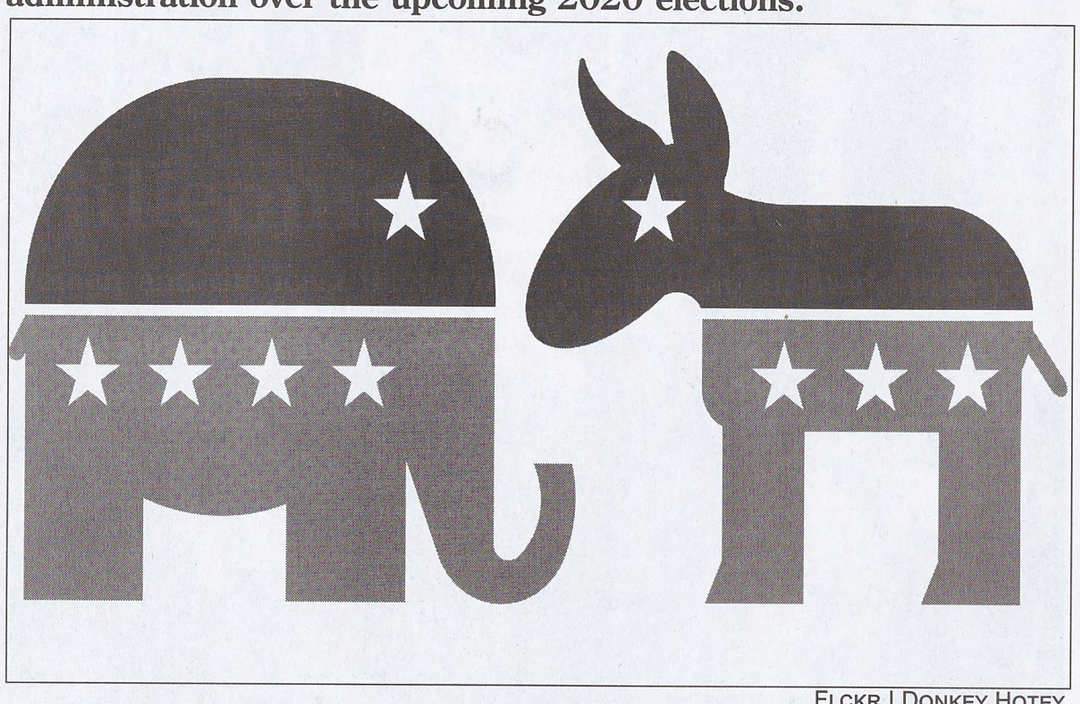
"I never really payed attention to politics, but I don't think it's right. I don't see how mass shootings relate to mental illness."
- CESAR RIVERA, ASTROPHYSICS

EDITORS NOTE

The views expressed on this page are solely those of the writer and do not necessarily reflect those of the Valley Star, its instructors, editors, staff or those of Los Angeles Valley College, its administration, faculty, staff or students.

Blue wave meets red wall in Senate

Democrats successfully took back the House, lost a little more of the Senate and prepare to wrestle with the Trump administration over the upcoming 2020 elections.



FLCKR | DONKEY HOTEY

ELECTION- Democrats faced off against Republicans in Midterm elections, and take the house.

SOLOMON SMITH
POLITICAL NEWS EDITOR

The midterms are almost over as Americans prepare to deal with the results. The increase in female voters coupled with the popularity of female candidates made women a significant power this election. Suburban and metropolitan areas were a source of votes for Democrats as disgruntled youth and independents turned out in record breaking numbers, the highest in 50 years according to NPR. Trump supporters also showed up to the polls for the Senate race reducing some of the momentum of the democratic wave.

Two great houses

Democrats had high hopes for the Senate and House of Representatives, but the results were mixed. Dems managed to ride the blue wave right over House Republicans to a majority. With a total of 435 seats, the Dems needed 218 seats to control the House and currently hold 224. There are more races still out, many of which favor of the Democrats. A majority in the House brings control of the committees, powerful organizations within the House run by representatives from the majority party who could implement more oversight over the government and the president.

Talk of gaining access to Trump's tax returns is a hot topic, but oversight and investigative powers of the president's cabinet will likely take center stage. Several cabinet members have left in disgrace for reasons ranging from campaign violations to mishandling of funds and the Democratic House now has the will to look into them more vigorously.

"Yesterday's election was a vote not only to restore the protections to health care, it was a vote to restore the health of our democracy"
-said Pelosi

Control of the lower House also gives the Democrats a real say in the passing of bills, and health care and border security will have to pass through both houses now.

Senate seats were a different story for the Democrats. Fighting uphill, the Dems were not expected to take the Senate, but have managed to reduce the number of seats lost holding onto 47 seats with 51 to the Republicans. Two seats remain undecided, Florida and Mississippi.

With an assured majority vote, and enough space to lose one or two votes from their fragmented party, the GOP is going to have the ability to pass through candidates for judicial and other presidentially nominated positions, reducing Democrat opposition to commentary and both parties know it.

Aftermath and Sour grapes

The Republicans and Democrats had two tonally opposite press conferences after the elections, both answering the one question on everyone's mind—what's next?

President Trump had one of his first pressers in months, stating that Republicans who lost their seats did not "embrace" him.

While highlighting part of the Republican strategy, he also said that the remaining losses were due to the "hostile" media coverage, a mass retiring of Republican house members and contentious confirmation of the Kavanaugh hearings.

He did, however, try to appeal to female voters, a group he lost by 19 points according to CNN. Trump congratulated several female senators who won, including Marsha Blackburn of Arizona (who later lost), and pointed out that Republicans will have a majority of the governorships. He soon returned to a gruffer stance on governing, stating that if House Democrats investigated him or his cabinet he fully intends to retaliate.

As for the plans of the president and his party, Trump bragged about his ability to work with Democrats and his intention to discuss infrastructure, providing "crystal-clean water" and "perfect air," claiming that the wall is something wanted by many Democrats as well. The conference then devolved into an angry showdown between the president and reporters.

Pelosi's press conference was a little more toned down as she congratulated the winners of her party while acknowledging issues that her party believes affected the vote.

"We had to jump over jerrymandered lines all over the country," said Pelosi. "When you think how jerrymandered the country is ... it is a tribute to the quality of our candidates, the determination of our grass roots folks across the country and the values of our American people."

She also made the case for her remaining in the leadership position, referring to her role as House Speaker during the Bush administration and her ability to keep the houses running even while opposing the Iraq war. More importantly, she made it clear that her party intends to work with the president and provide more oversight. This will be a point of contention that could grind government to a halt, but Pelosi seemed undaunted, describing oversight as a responsibility.

"Yesterday's election was a vote not only to restore the protections to health care, it was a vote to restore the health of our democracy," said Pelosi. "The American people wanted to put an end to the unchecked GOP control of Washington restoring again the checks and balances envisioned by our founders."

A plan of action and the emphasis of a coequal branch is the focus for Dems who want to "strive for bipartisanship," making it clear that the Democratic-controlled House intends to fight for its agenda and alleviated concerns that the they have no plan for action beyond opposition.

"We as Democrats are here to strengthen the institution that we serve and not as a rubber stamp for President Trump," said Pelosi.

Looking Forward

All of this concludes with an American legislative body more widely divided as middle of the road Republicans are pushed out in favor of Trump Republicans, who still have a majority of seats on the Supreme Court.

Fighting may be the main activity of the next two years for Congress, if the Obama presidency is any indication. Republicans lived for the sake of saying no and remain entrenched on many issues, like gun control, immigration and tax cuts. The 2020 Census will be an opportunity for the Democratic House to redraw House Districts and voting laws are also on the radar for both parties. Balancing much of this remains on the shoulders of a president's ability to meet both sides in the middle, something Trump has yet to be able to do.

Presidential bids for 2020 are the next big thing and as both parties choose their platforms, a mildly more leftist Democratic party is learning to adjust to new American voters, while Republicans dig in with their core supporters moving far into right field and possibly leaving mainstream America behind.

Millennials, Women vote Democrat

Women and the least likely voter, the millennial, made their comments on Republican's and Trump's rhetoric clear by bringing in a new generation of Democratic leaders.

SOLOMON SMITH
POLITICAL NEWS EDITOR

Polls in America are now closed, counts are being made and the results are mostly in—women and millennials won the mid-terms for Democrats.

In an election that gave America a divided house, Democrats did better than expected but not as well as hoped. Taking back the House of Representatives Democrats managed to reassert themselves in the Trump administration. Wining over 222 house seats gives them a pretty good majority, all with the aid of young, and often female, voters attracted to a more diverse Democratic offering.

In the legislative branch there will be 12 female senators, over 100 women as representatives, and about nine female senators. There will also be just over 150 LGBQT winners in both state and local elections, according to CNN. Nevada will have more women in office in their state senate than men. These are groups that have been problematic for Trump who has rallied for his base with rhetoric that leaves many women feeling left out.

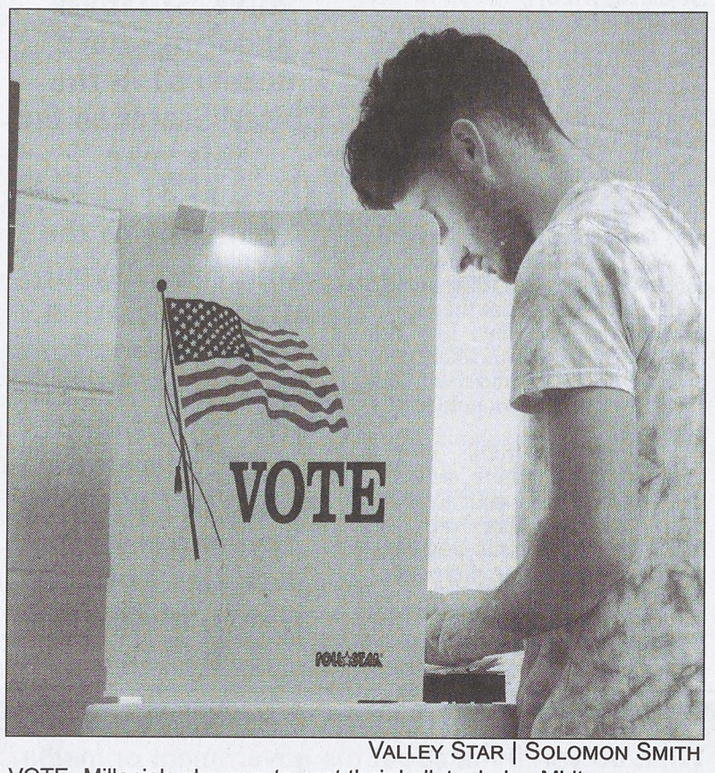
Young voters have been an elusive animal for both parties. With some of the lowest turnouts, the enthusiasm among this population has been historically low.

This year, however, mail in and early voting has been a boon to the Democratic party across the country and especially California. The Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement at Tufts University has shown in an early study (votes are still being counted) that, when compared to 2014, turnout was 10 percent higher this year. Two-thirds of voters aged 18-29 voted Democrat, according to Rasmussen and various exit polls. CNN exit polls have shown these groups have shifted towards the Democrats with 15 points from women voters.

Even with all of the numbers not yet in there is still a lot of information about voters to be inferred. Overwhelming Democratic wins in densely populated Republican held areas track with the fact that most of the young, educated upper middle-class voters cast their ballots for Democrats. In Houston, Texas Panill Flethcher defeated John Colberson in a traditionally Republican district. California managed to take more of the rare Republican seats with Mike Levin defeating Diane Harkey in the 49 District. Several over California Republican seats area also in danger.

Young voters have typically come from densely populated areas and have been more educated than the rural non-college educated white male voter of the Trump base. These newer voters also tend towards independence or the more liberal Democratic party.

With more minorities in office this year and voter reforms on the horizon in many states the Republicans, and President Trump could be in for a long hard two years.



VALLEY STAR | SOLOMON SMITH

VOTE- Millenials show up to cast their ballots during Midterms.

Political Short: Propositions outcomes for California

SOLOMON SMITH
POLITICAL NEWS EDITOR

- *Proposition 1* **Housing Assistance Bond**
- *Proposition 2* **Mentally Ill Housing assistance**
- *Proposition 3* **Water Fund**
- *Proposition 4* **Children's Hospital Fund**
- *Proposition 5* **Property tax aid**
- *Proposition 6* **Road Repairs (gas tax repeal)**
- *Proposition 7* **California to vote on Daylight Savings**
- *Proposition 8* **Dialysis Clinic Reform**
- *Proposition 10* **Rent Control**
- *Proposition 11* **Emergency Medical Workers Break**

The Valley Star

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GOT A LETTER TO THE EDITOR?

Letters to the editor can be sent to: editor@lavalleystar.com or submitted online at www.lavalleystar.com. Letters must be limited to 300 words and may be edited for content. Full name and contact information must be supplied in order for letters to be printed. Send by Thursday for the following week's issue.

VALLEY LIFE

We're stronger together: Hillel 818 mourns the Pittsburgh massacre victims

The Jewish Student Union held a vigil on campus, something Jewish communities worldwide are partaking in.

MEGAN JACKSON
NEWS EDITOR

Hillel 818 hosted a vigil on campus Thursday to honor the victims of the Pittsburgh massacre as well as to send a message of light and solidarity amongst the Jewish community.

The vigil started with a reading of the names of the 11 victims: Joyce Fienberg, Richard Gottfried, Rose Mallinger, Jerry Rabinowitz, Cecil Rosenthal, David Rosenthal, Bernice Simon, Sylvan Simon, Daniel Stein, Melvin Wax and Irving Younger. These older members of the Jewish community went to the Tree of Life Congregation on Shabbat to attend a conservative shul, not knowing it would be the last service they would ever attend.

"The fact that we're all here in solidarity should show a message to the world at large."

- Bryan Borenstein

"It happened for one reason and one reason only–baseless hatred," said Bryan Borenstein, Rabbi for Hillel 818. "The person who went into that synagogue didn't care if he was going to kill an orthodox Jew, a conservative Jew or a reformed jew; he just wanted to kill Jews."

Led by Borenstein, approximately 30 students, faculty and members of the Jewish community, as well as other faiths, gathered at the free speech area to share prayers, poems and pay their respect to the victims. The purpose of the vigil was to mourn those lost and to look forward as a community.

"The hatred that exists in our country is alive and strong. All of us coming here together today, we're hopefully showing unity," continued Borenstein. "A unification between Christians, Jews and Muslims, between gays and straights and blacks and whites. The fact that we're all here in solidarity should show a message to the world at large."

Other interfaith vigils have been held all over the United States as well as in many Canadian cities. The Eiffel Tower in Paris was darkened Sunday night. Multiple NFL games held moments of silence before kickoff to commemorate the dead. Players from the Pittsburgh Steelers and Coach Mike Tomlin went to the Rodef Shalom Temple on their off-day to pay their respects.

Although this event affects Jewish communities worldwide, the community of Squirrel Hill is traumatized. Saturday morning, parents were told to not go outside or let the children leave their homes. There was a lockdown Wednesday at the local elementary school, whose population is 30 percent Jewish. Many children in the community express that they do not want to go to school, do not want to leave the house and do not want to go to synagogues out of fear. However, the support and donations from people from all over the country are incredibly comforting to the residents of Squirrel Hill.

VALLEY STAR | MICKIE SHAW

COME TOGETHER- Students and on-lookers join Hillel 818 in Valley's free speech area to honor the deaths during the Pittsburgh massacre.

"The outpouring of support from all these vigils across the country is incredibly meaningful … The trauma that took place this past weekend is going to stay with that community for a very long time," said David Katz, Hillel 818 director and former Pittsburgh resident. "I thank you for helping us and for helping them to heal and I really feel that today we are all part of the Pittsburgh community."

There's no erasing this boy

"Boy Erased" depicts the horrors of conversion therapy, a program that thousands of LGBTQ members have undergone in attempts to "fix" them.

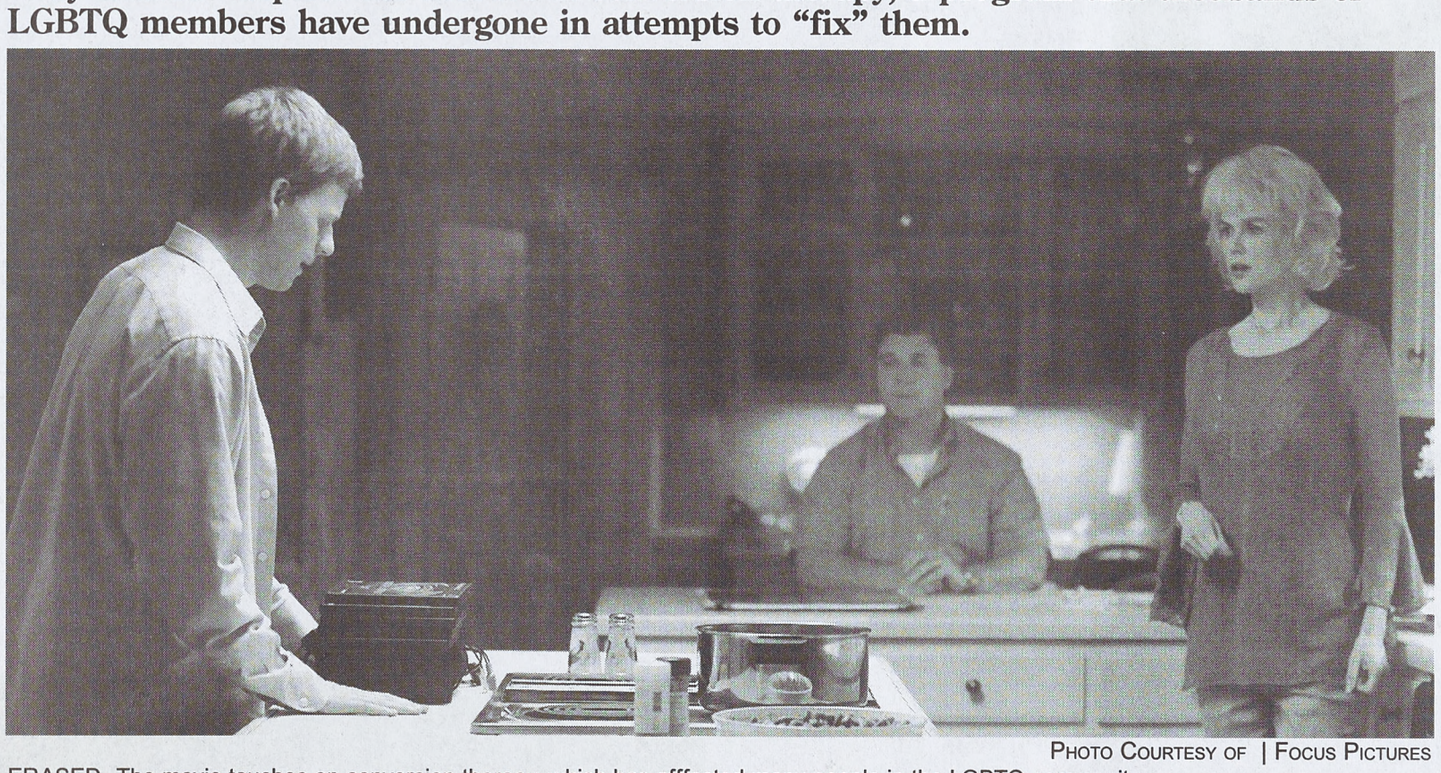

PHOTO COURTESY OF | FOCUS PICTURES

ERASED- The movie touches on conversion therapy, which has afffected many people in the LGBTQ community.

MEGAN JACKSON
NEWS EDITOR

"Boy Erased" recounts the chilling story of a young man being ridiculed by his family, friends and faith for being gay, something millions of people know all too well.

Jared is the son of a small-town Baptist pastor who gets outed to his parents at age 19. In efforts to "fix" him, Jared's parents, Marshall and Nancy, send him to a gay-conversion program. The teen is faced with the ultimatum to attend the program or to be rejected by his family and community. The film follows the troubling reality of conversion programs and the lifelong impact it has on relationships as well as the individual.

Directed by Joel Edgerton ("The Gift"), Lucas Hedges shines alongside Academy Award winners Nicole Kidman and Russell Crowe in this true story based on Garrard Conley's memoir, "Boy Erased." Hedges ("Manchester By The Sea," "Ladybird") portrays the role of Jared beautifully; we can feel his confusion, pain, and longing for acceptance throughout the entire film. Tackling such rough subject matter, this film requires a wide performance range as well as a strong level of skill; Hedges work was exemplary.

Emotional, verbal and physical abuse in conversion therapy was illustrated in a way that was hard to watch at times but delivered the topic in a clear way. The head therapist Mr. Sykes, portrayed by Edgerton, tried to poison the teens against their parents, instilled that "God won't love you the way you are right now," and beating them with bibles. The dynamic relationships between Jared and his parents, peers and Sykes helped intensify the struggle to understand as well as the severity of religious rejection to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender people worldwide. Approximately 700,000 LGBTQ adults have undergone conversion therapy at some point in their lives, according to a January 2018 UCLA study.

Marshall and Jared's relationship is frustrating yet promising. At the beginning of the film, Jared had a girlfriend, attended church every weekend to listen to his dad's service, and was guaranteed to take over the family Ford dealership. The moment Jared came out, everything changed. Marshall's "pray the gay away" mentality is what embarked Jared's journey at the program; Jared would do anything to gain his father's approval again. As the film progresses, we see periods of silence, anger, miscommunication, and eventually a mutual understanding between these two characters. Crowe's uncanny resemblance to the real-life Marshall does not compare to his spot-on performance, nailing the role by spending time with Conley's father

Another theme present in this film is women "falling into line." Kidman's character felt as though she could not speak up to her husband when he decided to send Jared to conversion therapy. Nancy is the only parent present throughout Jared's therapy and arguably afterwards; she observes his struggles and questions the authenticity of the program. The soft-spoken mother specifically has the biggest progression in this film and eventually takes a stand; something many parents in her situation take too long to do or never do.

This shocking, heart-warming, educational film is definitely worth seeing and most likely will end up with multiple nominations this upcoming awards season. "Boy Erased" will be released in theatres worldwide this November.

VALLEY'S STARS

★★★★★

Rated R
Must Watch Movie
Now Playing in theatres.

Dozens of students gather to clean up trash

Students and teachers volunteered to help collect the trash scattered all around Valley College.

GABRIEL ARIZON
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Thirty Valley College students and faculty joined together this past Tuesday in an effort to help clean up some of the trash that littered the campus.

The ASU hosted Trash Awareness Day on Nov. 6, bringing together several students and staff to assist in cleaning up the hidden trash scattered around Valley. The event was organized by ASU Commissioner of Campus and Environmental Concerns Eddie Kaufman-Morrow, who had the idea for it back in August.

"Hopefully we create change and we create some sort of awareness for the other students to see that we do care," Kaufman-Morrow said.

The volunteers were divided into three groups covering different areas on campus: the northwest section from the library to the Child Development Center, the southwest section from the Administration and Career Advancement Building to the Allied Health and Science Center and the east section that covered the gyms.

After roughly an hour of gathering trash, the volunteers made their way back to the Skybox Conference Room, where they were treated to free food. In total, 30.4 pounds of trash were collected, with the most coming from the southwest section at 12 pounds. Kaufman-Morrow, who went to the northwest section, found that most of the trash his group collected – particularly cigarette butts – was around the parking structure near the Student Union Building.

Claudia Hasenhuttl, an assistant professor who teaches geography, had her lab class participate in the event in exchange for extra credit.

"Though it is generally folks who are already aware of what trash does to the environment who are participating in these events," Professor Hasenhuttl said, "there are always some who are helping in a community clean-up for the first time. It is often quite an eye-opener for them to see just how much trash accumulates."

"We all go here. We all spend a big portion of our week here, the least we could do is take care of where we go."

- Adolfo Reyes

"We all go here. We all spend a big portion of our week here," Adolfo Reyes said, a student of Hasenhuttl. "The least we could do is take of where we go."

Despite a high turnout, Kaufman-Morrow hopes to get even more volunteers in the future.

"Hopefully I can give out some prizes for the group who got more trash than the other," Kaufman-Morrow said. "Maybe I can make it competitive in the future. We definitely want to be able to get it on TV at some point."

According to CalRecycle, California landfilled or exported for landfill 35.2 million tons of trash in 2016, plus an additional 7.4 million tons of "disposal-related" materials. This puts the disposal rate at 6 pounds per resident per day in the state.

The next Trash Awareness Day will take place on Dec. 18 from 1 to 2 p.m. To join, go to the Skybox Conference Room located on the second floor of the Student Union Building.

Latino Heritage Week celebrates community

Valley College held a series of events at the end of October to honor the heritage of its Latinx students, from a screening of "Coco" to Aztec dancers.

GABRIEL ARIZON
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

From a workshop to help those in the LGBTQ community to altars remembering deceased loved ones, Valley College hosted a week-long event to celebrate Latinx culture.

Between Oct. 29 and Nov. 1, Valley held Latino Heritage Week, which comprised of several events for all students to participate in and learn more about Latino culture. The week-long event was a collaboration between the ASU, the Chicano Studies Department, MEChA, Student Equity, Mi Comunidad and the LGBTQ+ Club.

"It's important to be proud of your roots and your heritage. Don't be ashamed of your culture. It's who you are inside."
- Jose Romo

"The purpose is to expose our Latino students to their Latin America culture," said Jose Romo, the ASU commissioner of ethnic and cultural affairs. "It's important to be proud of your roots and your heritage. Don't be ashamed of your culture. It's who you are inside."

"The more we talk about the issues affecting our communities, the better we can relate to the humanity of someone."
- Matthew Contreras

The week kicked off with an LGBTQ+ workshop, which discussed the struggles and myths those in the LGBTQ+ community face, specifically with a Latino theme. The workshop was hosted by Matthew Contreras, who works with The Village Family Services (a non-profit organization that provides aid to those who have suffered from addiction, neglect, violence, homelessness and abuse) and was the former co-president of The Queer Collective, CSUN's LGBTQ+ club.

VALLEY STAR | GABRIEL ARIZON
ALTAR- Students share their altars, dedicated to past loved ones, during the Dia de Los Muertos event in Monarch Hall.

As an openly gay Latino male, he discussed his own experience with coming out and tried to help those in a similar situation.

"Using your knowledge in an applicable manner is empowering," Contreras said. "The more we talk about the issues affecting our communities, the better we can relate to the humanity of someone."

"I think [Contreras] covered a lot of important topics that need to be talked about in the LGBTQ community and in the Latinx community," student Daniela Peralta said, who identifies as gender fluid, "since ... it really is hard for some of us to come out."

The next day, the ASU hosted a screening of "Coco," a Pixar movie that takes great inspiration from the Mexican Dia de Los Muertos holiday, otherwise known as Day of the Dead. Afterwards, attendees stayed around to play a few games of Loteria, a game of chance that shares some similarities to bingo.

On Wednesday, during Halloween, the ASU held their Club Day event in the Student Services Plaza, with tables decorated to celebrate the holiday. Free food was offered later in the day with an accompanying performance by Mariachi Arcoiris de Los Angeles, the world's first and only LGBTQ+ mariachi.

"I think it's great that all cultures get to know each other's cultures and celebrate these important things for us."
- Beatriz Aragon

"I really like these college gigs because I'm a college student, so it's kind of fun to just be in the same atmosphere and representing my queer, Latinx family," band member Allan Vasquez-Lopez said. "Being a queer, Latinx person, representation is very important to me, and so being in this group is just something that's super big for our community."

"This is my favorite Club Day," MEChA treasurer Ki Blanco said. "There's definitely more energy and a lot more engagement."

The week ended with the school's own Dia de los Muertos event, where students made their own altars to commemorate lost loved ones. The altars were displayed in Monarch Hall, with Aztec dancers from the group known as In Tlanextli Tlacopan appearing in special self-made outfits, called regalia, to treat guests with traditional dances.

"I think it's great that all cultures get to know each other's cultures and celebrate these important things for us," Beatriz Aragon said, who helped make an altar to remember her great-grandparents and her cat.

"It's important for us to celebrate who we are as Valley College students, faculty and staff in any way we can," Chicano Studies professor Pete Lopez said.

VALLEY STAR | GABRIEL ARIZON
MARIACHI- Mariachi Arcoiris de Los Angeles, the world's first and only LGBTQ+ mariachi, preforms at Valley.

Valley students benefit from $20,000 endowment

Jennifer and Larry Levine establish endowment for students out of respect for late Valley College journalism professor.

JESSIC AVA LANGE
ONLINE EDITOR

Former Valley College student Larry Levine returned to campus to honor his late instructor with a $20,000 endowment that will benefit journalism students.

Levine took one class from his mentor Kenneth S. Devol at Valley, but met the former instructor in eighth grade. Levine said Devol, who died in 1997, changed his life with one journalism class at Luther Burbank Junior High.

"In one day, Ken helped me discover that I could write," Levine said. "In the first hour, in the first class."

Levine wants to honor the memory of Devol, a man who taught for nearly 30 years at Valley and CSUN and wrote the book "Mass Media and the Supreme Court." He recalls that Devol helped students grow into their greatest potential.

Devol received his doctorate from USC before attending Stanford University, studying journalism law and ethics. His career spanned over four decades, including as acting associate dean of the School of Communication and Professional Studies at CSUN where he received the Distinguished Professor Award. In addition, he taught at USC, San Jose State and Cal State Fullerton.

"It was that respect that allowed journalism to be well-respected on our campus."
- Larry Levine

"Students always said that his mass medial law class was the most difficult and most rewarding class they had at the university" according to an LA Times Article. "He was extraordinarily respected by the world of journalism education. It was that respect that allowed journalism to be well-respected on our campus."

For his part, Levine went on to write for The Burbank Daily Review, The Valley Times and The Los Angeles Herald Examiner, and The Daily News. Later, Levine began writing commercials for Tom Bradley's first mayoral race and today owns his political consulting firm – Larry Levine & Associates in Sherman Oaks.

Along with his wife Jennifer, Larry established the Jennifer and Larry Levine Endowment with $20,000 to honor Kenneth S. Devol and provide scholarships for journalism students for years to come.

Dia De Los Muertos: Altar 101 and their significance

Altars are a special part during the holiday, in which death is celebrated.

MONSERRAT SOLIS
CO-EDITOR-IN-CHIEF

Alters made for Dia de Los Muertos are built and thoughfully curated by loved ones– to honor and celebrate life and death.

Dia de Los Muertos is a Mexican holiday starting on Oct. 31 and ending on Nov. 2 in which family and friends honor loved ones who have died. While most people may find death to be morbid, Mexicans create alters as remembrance.

Ofrendas (spanish for offerings) are placed at the alter to guide the spirit back. This consists of favorite items the person whom the alter is intended for. Some people chose to offer beer, pan dulce (spanish for sweet bread), candies, flowers, jewelry or books.

Typically an altar will have candles, to light the spirit's way, Mexican marigold flowers, pictures of the person the altar is dedicated to and papel picado (spanish for cut paper).

VALLEY STAR | GABRIEL ARIZON
ALTAR- Students display thier altars at Latino Heritage Week.

Papel picado is made from colorful tissue paper and it is cut into elaborate designs like flowers or skulls.

Towns in Mexico and all around the world will celebrate Dia de Los Muertos by holding parades and festivals.

The altars are only one step of the annual tradition, that dates back more than 3,000 years.

As we honor past family and friends, the altars are an important reminder of the people we love.